



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

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Honor Flight Taking Veterans To WWII Memorial

40 World War II Kentucky Veterans Fly to D.C. May 21

(FRANKFORT, KY May 8, 2008) They are all past 80 now. Sixty-three years after they saved the world, most of their comrades are gone. Not that long ago they dominated the veteran population, but today they are far outnumbered by those who fought in later wars. We are losing them faster every day.

But Honor Flight and the Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund are making sure that Kentucky's surviving World War II veterans will not miss seeing the national tribute to their service: the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C.

On May 21, 40 World War II veterans will board the first Honor Flight of Kentuckians in Louisville. As the name suggests, Honor Flight provides air and ground transportation, meals and individual support for free to the veterans. The organization is entirely supported by donations from individuals, religious, civic and veterans service organizations and corporations.

To begin Kentucky Honor Flights, Honor Flight Bluegrass Chapter received \$25,000 from the Veterans Program Trust Fund, which is administered by the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs.

“We are pleased and proud to have helped bring Honor Flights to Kentucky’s World War II veterans,” said Trust Fund Chairman Les Beavers, BG USA (Ret.) “As we saw on the recent NBC news special about Honor Flight, this program has been enormously successful throughout the country. Our veterans can’t wait to be a part of it.”

“Final planning is now underway for our inaugural flight on May 21, 2008,” wrote Brian Duffy, Honor Flight Bluegrass Chapter’s Director of Flight Operations, in a letter to Chairman Beavers.

“We already have three additional flights planned for this operational season. The assistance of the Veterans Program Trust Fund quite simply helped to make this happen. Thanks to your efforts, our upcoming 2008 Honor Flights will help ensure that 120 of our honored heroes from WWII will have a safe and memorable experience.”

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are an estimated 36,569 World War II veterans living in Kentucky.

As the national organization notes, “very few of these senior veterans have the logistical knowledge or physical strength to complete an unescorted conventional trip to Washington, D.C.

“It is our mission to honor as many of these remaining selfless ‘ordinary people who saved the world’ as we can by providing them an organized and expense-paid, escorted day trip to visit their memorial.

“Volunteer guardians (escorts) pay their own way, and personally assist the senior veterans throughout the trip.”

The veterans and guardians on this first Honor Flight will meet at the Louisville Airport at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 21. At the Fort Knox Reception Lounge, Lt. Governor Dan Mongiardo will address them, and veterans will be available for press photographs and interviews until 9 a.m.